YOU'RE GONNA PAY !!!

BR LAAM

ACT VIII : KARAKURI * MACHINERY
"TEMPORARY CURTAIN DROP"

...TO GET SOME INFO OUT OF US,

RIGHT?

HA HA...

YOU LET US HAVE THE UPPER HAND...

IT'S A LITTLE LATE!

THESE TWO PUPPETS ARE TOO WEAK!

KENISS, ANOSS, YOU UNDERESTIMATED THEM... IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT!

WE'RE GONNA KILL 'EM!!!

...

UHM... I WASN'T PRETEND-ING...

NO AUTOMATON SHALL DISRESPECT THE NAME OF GUY-CHRISTOPHER RECH!

GUY...

I KNOW... THEY ONLY CAME TO SEE WHO NARUMI WAS. THEY HEARD OF A NEW SHIROGANE, WHEN WE ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO HAVE ANY MORE AQUA VITAE.

...A NEW SOFT STONE, THE SOURCE OF AQUA VITAE.

...WHETHER WE SHIRO-GANE HAD OBTAINED ...

YES, THAT IS SURELY IT. THEY ONLY CAME TO SEE...

UHM, LUCILLE... I DON'T UNDER-STAND.

THE SOFT STONE STILL EXISTS? I THOUGHT IT WAS GONE.

HA HA...

IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK?

LOST IT?!

...

SO... THAT PIECE OF THE STONE, YOU...

IN REALITY,

WE FOUND A PIECE OF THE STONE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WELL.

I WILL TELL YOU HOW IT HAPPENED!

HA HA HA HA !!!

RATHER INTERESTING, IS IT NOT, NARUMI?!

GRAAH

AAH

AND LET ME BUTCHER GUY!

IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER BEEN HUMILIATED LIKE THAT!

MASTER ARLEQUINO, I BEG OF YOU!

LET ME KILL NARUMI!

CALM DOWN!

KENISS, ANOSS! YOU ARE TOO IMPATIENT!

WE WERE ALSO LOOKING FOR A SOFT STONE,

BECAUSE IT ALLOWS THE CREATION OF AQUA VITAE.

WE AUTOMATONS HAVE TRAVELED THE WORLD OVER, LOOKING FOR THE AQUA VITAE, BECAUSE WE YEARN TO BECOME LIKE HUMANS.

...SAID SOMETHING.

...ONE OF THE SHIROGANE HUNTING US...

ONE DAY, ABOUT 15 YEARS AFTER WE'D STARTED TRAVELING...

"THE SOFT STONE IS BEING KEPT...

...BY THE SHIROGANE, IN A SPECIAL CONTAINER."

FIERCE BATTLES TOOK PLACE BETWEEN ALITOMATONS AND SHIROGANE.

THERE-AFTER,

...

YOU HAD THE STONE?!

I DON'T GET IT ANYMORE!

IT WAS THEIR ONLY HOPE OF BECOMING HUMAN.

THE ALITOMATONS' OBJECTIVE, OF COURSE, WAS THE STONE.

OF COURSE, THE SHIRO-GANE WHO GAVE THAT INFORMATION DID IT ON PURPOSE.

IT WAS THE ONLY THING CAPABLE OF CREATING AQUA VITAE, WHICH ALLOWED US TO CREATE MORE SHIROGANE.

BUT WE SHIROGANE NEEDED TO PROTECT IT.

THE SHIROGANE WOULD NOT HAVE TO PURSUE THEM ONE BY ONE ANYMORE. THEY FLOCKED TO THE CASTLE IN HORDES, ATTRACTED BY THE STONE!

...WOULD ATTRACT THE AUTOMATONS.

SPREADING THE NEWS ABOUT THE SOFT STONE...

...BECAUSE...

...ESCAPED OUR GRASP AT THE LAST SECOND, EACH AND EVERY TIME...

THAT WHICH WE COVETED SO MUCH...

THERE WERE MORE THAN 500 SUCH BATTLES IN THE PAST.

BUT WE COULD NEVER REACH IT!

YOU, LUCILLE ...

...WERE ALWAYS IN FRONT OF THIS "CONTAINER".

OF COURSE!

...

IT'S KINDA WEIRD TO BE USING THAT WORD!

SAY,

YOU GUYS'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT A "CONTAINER" FOR A WHILE.

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO KEEP IT IN ITS ORIGINAL STATE.

IT EVAPORATES WHEN IT IS EXPOSED TO OPEN AIR FOR TOO LONG.

HUH?

THE SOFT STONE HAS STRANGE PROPERTIES.

SO, WHAT DID YOU KEEP IT IN?

IF IT HAD BEEN PLACED IN A BOX OR A COMMON FLASK...

IT WOULD HAVE COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED WITHIN 15 DAYS.

HUH?!

I WILL HELP YOU... IT'S A CONTAINER MADE FROM THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS, IN EXACT PROPORTIONS: 62.6% OXYGEN, 19.5% CARBON, 9.3% HYDROGEN, 1.42% CALCIUM, ETC...

DILANG

TAKE A GUESS!

THAT IS THE MOST INTEREST-ING POINT, NARUMI!

HA HA HA!

IT'S THE CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF A HUMAN BODY!

A HUMAN... BODY?!

IN THE BODY OF AN ADULT, THE STONE COULD HAVE CAUSED A REACTION.

CONSEQUENTLY, WE HAD TO HIDE IT... IN THE BODY OF A CHILD.

HA

HA

HA

DAH!

..AS A CONTAINER FOR THE SOFT STONE?!

LUCILLE... YOU USED YOUR OWN DAUGHTER ...

ANGELICA WAS THE ONLY CHILD TO SURVIVE THE MASSACRE IN OUR VILLAGE.

WE HAD NO CHOICE.

PLEASE, ALLOW US TO KILL THEM!!!

MASTER! IT'S NO USE CHATTING ANY LONGER!

SO?

WHAT HAPPENED TO HER, THEN?

KENISS, ANOSS, YOU MAY TAKE CARE OF THEM IF YOU WISH.

AFTERWARDS... SHE LIVED IN A FARAWAY COUNTRY... AND DIED APPROXIMATELY 18 YEARS AGO.

ANGELICA SERVED AS BAIT TO ATTRACT AUTOMATONS... AND DID SO MORE THAN 500 TIMES!

HA-HA-HA-HA-HA

SHE DIED IN YOUR COUNTRY, NARUMI.

HUH?!

STOP DAYDREAMING, NARUMI!!

SHE DIED... IN JAPAN?!

ZAH!

YOU'RE GONNA DIE!!!

BA

AND THE STONE IN ANGEL-ICA'S BODY?

GLORG... BLURG...

GUH... GUHAH!

YOME

IS IT NOT, LUCILLE?

HE HE... THAT...

IS THE SOURCE OF AN EVEN GREATER CONFLICT BETWEEN AUTOMATONS AND SHIRO-GANE!

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

NARUMI!! MOVE!

...OF THIS FAMOUS STONE!

EVERYONE LOST TRACK ...

SLOSH
SLASH

THE SOFT STONE IS VITAL FOR ALL OF US!
WHEN THE SHIROGANE SAW THAT THE STONE WAS NOT IN ANGELICA'S BODY ANYMORE, THEY PANICKED.

SINCE THEN, THE AUTOMATONS ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES LOOKING FOR THE SOFT STONE ANYMORE.
GUY!

POF

MASTER... ARLEQUINO... PLEASE HELP US!

GAAAH!

IT HAS BEEN A RACE TO FIND THE SOFT STONE FIRST.

RIGHT, LUCILLE ?

SINCE THAT DAY,

BETWEEN US AND THE SHIROGANE,

I HOPE YOU ARE AT LEAST STILL ABLE TO FLY!

COME HERE, YOU TWO! WE'RE GOING HOME! I AM REALLY ASHAMED OF YOU!

VRVOM...

VRVOM...

DID YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO TELL US?

ARLE-QUINO ...

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY YOU CAME HERE.

HMM...

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

POH POH POH POH

GUY, NARUMI ...

SEE YOU SOON...

HEY! WAIT A MINUTE!

BLAMMMM

BY THE WAY, I ALMOST FORGOT.

VUMM

NARUMI, NEXT TIME WE MEET, I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HIT ME WITH A LITTLE MORE CONVICTION.

HERE ARE THE WORDS OF THE ONLY PERSON WHO KNEW WHERE THE STONE WAS, WHEN IT DISAP-PEARED IN JAPAN...

MANY SHIROGANE HAVE LOOKED FOR THIS STONE, TO NO AVAIL.

HM... HOW CAN ONE SEARCH EFFICIENTLY WITH SUCH AMBIGUOUS CLUES?!

"THE SOFT STONE...

...IS WITH THE ONE WITH A GOOD SMILE"

LUCILLE ...

H H H

...HAS DEVISED AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO FIND IT!

THE MIDNIGHT CIRCUS...